WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Smuggling in IA Flights

3636. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIAL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Asian Age dated the 24th March, 2002 stating that some of the domestic flights in the Indian Airlines arc being misused to smuggle foreign consumer products to New Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the corrective/preventive steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. However, there is no involvement of any employee of Indian Airlines in the incidents reported in the Press clipping referred to in the Question. The details of the incidents are as under:—

(i) Indian Airlines have been advised by the Customs authorities that incidents is relating to confiscation of 150 mobile phone and equipment by air customs from the cargo shipped on a Jet Airways flight which arrived at Delhi from Hyderabad at 2140 hrs. on 21st March, 2002. 150 mobile phones and 2870 spectacle frames of foreign origin valued at Rs. 2.7 lakhs were recovered and seized from a cargo consignment by Customs from the cargo area of Jet Airways, IGI Airport, New Delhi.

(ii) On inquiry by Indian Airlines, Deputy Commissioner (Customs), Customs House, IGI Airport, New Delhi, has advised that on 17th March 2002, a courier consignment which arrived at Delhi by Indian Airlines flight IC-440 from Chcnnai was intercepted by the officials of Customs Preventive while being carried in a 3-whcclcr by the representatives of M/s Ganesh Cargo Forwarder. 334 mobile phones, 285 adopters

and 49 pieces of ear phones of foreign origin valued at Rs. 21,58,750/-were seized by the Customs. The case is under investigation by the Customs Department.

Security Lapse at Coimbatore airport

3637. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government arc aware of a major security lapse at Coimbatore airport within a week after the Central Industrial Security Force took over;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any person has been held responsible for such a great risk; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to stop recurrence ot such lapse at airports all over the country?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) to (d) An incident of theft was reported at Coimbatore airport on 27.1.2002 in which 25 approach light fittings/bulbs were found missing. The entire stolen property worth Rs. 50,000/- has since been recovered. An enquiry has been ordered into the incident.

To ensure that such incidents do not recur. Central Industrial Security Force is now regularly patrolling around the perimeter wall.

Security lapses at international airports

3638. SHRI CO. POULOSE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, 'International airport vulnerable to security breach' which appeared in Hindustan Times dated the 2nd February, 2002;